The Sable Lorcha

By HORACE HAZELTINE

SYNOPSIS.

Robert Cameron, capitalist, consults Phillip Clyde, newspaper publisher, regarding anonymous threatening letters he has received. The first promises a sample of the writer's power on a certain day. On that day the head is mysteriously cut from a portrait of Cameron while the latter is in the room. Clyde has a theory that the portrait was mutilated while the room was unoccupied and the head later removed by means of a string, unnoticed by Cameron. Evelyn Grayson, Cameron's niece, with whom Clyde is in love, finds the head of Cameron's portrait nailed to a tree, where it was had been used as a target. Clyde pledges Evelyn to secrecy. Clyde learns that a Chinese boy employed by Philetus Murphy, an artist living nearby, had borrowed a rifle from Cameron's lodgekeeper. Clyde makes an excuse to call on Murphy and is repulsed. He pretends to be investigating alleged infractions of the game laws and speaks of finding the bowl of an opium pipe under the tree where Cameron's portrait was found. The Chinese boy is found dead next morning. While visiting Cameron in his dressing room a Nell Gwynne mirror is mysteriously shattered. Cameron becomes seriously ill as a result of the shock. The third letter appears mysteriously on Cameron's sick bed. It makes direct threats against the life of Cameron. Clyde tells Cameron the envelope was empty. He tells Evelyn everything and plans to take Cameron on a yacht trip.

CHAPTER VIII.

Somewhere East of Nantucket.

The Sibylla under stress of her powerful turbines was racing easily, reeling off her thirty knots with no seeming effort and scarcely a perceptible vibration. There had been a stiff breeze during the night, but it had died down at sunrise, and now, at noon, the sea was calm as the bosom of a nun. The sun blazed on the yacht's polished brasses, intensifying the snowy whiteness of her glossy paint, and turning to jewelled showers the spray which fell away from her sharp prow and caressed her long, sleek sides. It was wonderful weather for late October. On the nineteenth the temperature had risen to ninety in New York, breaking all records for that date; and now, two days later, here at the meeting of sound and ocean, with Point Judith just coming into view over our port bow, and Block Island a blur abaft our starboard beam, we sat, Cameron and I, shaded by spread awnings, on the after-deck, as though it were midsummer. For he had been convinced by my righteous untruth, after repeated and emphatic dinning, and had daily grown stronger; readily agreeing at length to a cruise along the coast, with Bar Harbor as objective.

"That is precisely what I had the Sibylla built for," he told me, when my suggestion found acceptance. "Did you ever notice the inscription on the brass tablet over the fireplace in the saloon? No? Well, it's this: 'Sibylla, when thou seest me faynte, address thyselfe the gyde of my complaynte.'

"I found it in an old book, published in 1563, a poetic induction to 'The Mirror of Magistrates,' written by Thomas Sackville. You can fancy how my application distorts the original intention; but Sackville isn't likely to trouble me over it."

I repeat this explanation now mainly to indicate the improved temper of the speaker. His mind was placid once again, and with this recovered placidity had come a return of his quiet humor. For my own part I was not altogether happy. My delight over my friend's recovery, and Evelyn's pleasure thereat, was curdled by self-reproach regarding the instrument I had employed to bring it about. A lie is to me a most contemptible agent, and to make use of one has been always abhorrent. In this instance I had salved my conscience in a measure with the old excuse that the end justified the means, but it was only in a measure, and I was far from being as happy as I pretended.

Moreover, I could not rid myself of an uneasiness—a misery, indeed, in which I was now without company—concerning the day and its menace. I say "without company," for Cameron, of course, had quite dismissed the subject, and Evelyn, who previously was greatly perturbed, had seemed to put away all apprehension directly she saw us safe aboard the yacht. There had been some talk of her accompanying us, but without signifying my real reason, I had managed to dissuade her.

For my disquietude there was certainly no logical ground. I had taken the precaution of having the Sibylla searched from masthead to keelson before sailing. The coal was examined as carefully as that of a battleship in time of war; every locker and cupboard was inspected; even the ventilators were metaphorically turned inside out and the record of every man of the crew was looked into with vigorous scrutiny. So I could see no loophole unguarded. But the past was an argument which set logic at naught. If such things could be as that which had happened a month ago in Cameron's dressing room, how much further might the inexplicable carry? Of what use were precautions against an enemy who with apparent ease calmly defied all natural laws?

All the morning my thoughts had been running in this line. Foolish thoughts they must seem to one who reads of them; worthy only to be classed with the idle, superstitious fears of young girls and old women, and impossible to a well-balanced, clear-headed man of twenty-nine. It may be that I was not well-balanced and clear-headed. And yet the sequel would tend rather to a contrary conclusion.

Cameron was still reading the Herald, and I sat with a pair of binoculars at my eyes sweeping the waters for the trailing smoke of a liner or some object of lesser interest.

Presently the silence was broken by my companion.

"I see," he began, dropping the paper to his knees, "that China is really in earnest in her anti-opium campaign. Two Peking officials have died from the effects of a too-hasty breaking of the habit. Men do not die in the attempt to obey mere paper reforms. The Chinese are a wonderful old people, Clyde."

I lowered my glasses, all at once interested.

"You've been in China?" I asked.

"No, I haven't," was his answer. "I've always meant to go; but when I was nearest, ill news drew me home; and so I never got closer than Yokohama on one side, and Srinagar, in Kashmir, on the other."

"You've seen something of them in this country, I suppose?"

"No, very little. I attended a dinner once at which Li Hung Chang was the guest of honor; and I've eaten chop suey in one of those Chinese eating palaces they have in Chicago. That's about the extent of my personal Chinese experience. But I have always been interested in the country and its people. I have read about everything that has been published on the subject. By the way, did they ever find out who killed that boy of Murphy's?"

"Not yet," I answered. "They've had some of his own kind under surveillance, but no more arrests have been made."

"Murphy was released?"

"Yes."

He took up his paper again and once more I applied myself to seagazing.

Far away to the northeast I made out what appeared to me to be a seagoing tug or pilot boat, steaming, I thought, with rather unusual speed for a vessel of her class. It was not much of a discovery, but the waters had been very barren that morning, especially for the last two hours, and insignificant as this object was I felt in a manner rewarded for my vigil.

Half an hour later she had slipped out of sight and I was busy in an effort to pick her up again, when a cry from the lookout forward directed my attention to a floating speck possibly two miles or more dead ahead, and not more than a point off our course.

"Come," I said to Cameron, "let's go up on the bridge and have a look!"

"And have our trouble for our pains?" he returned, incredulously. "It's probably some bit of wreckage, a box or a cask."

"Very well," I agreed, starting off alone. "Even a box or a cask is worth while as a variation."

When on nearer approach the drifting object proved to be a fisherman's dory, with a man, either dead or unconscious, plainly discernible in the bottom, I should hardly have been human had I not experienced a degree of satisfaction over Cameron's failure as a prophet. That, however, was the least abiding of my sensations. In an instant it had given way to anxiety concerning the boat's occupant and interest in the business-like manner in which MacLeod, the stocky young executive officer of the Sibylla, was preparing to pick up our find.

The engine room had been signaled half-speed ahead, and already a sailor with a coil of rope in hand was stationed at the forward gangway. I have frequently seen river pilots make landings that were marvels of clever calculation, but I never saw any steering more accurately gauged than that by which MacLeod, here in the open sea, with the precarious swell and surge of ocean to combat, brought the yacht gliding within a bare three inches of the rolling dory's bow.

I was leaning over the rail as we came thus upon the castaway, and saw clearly enough for just a moment the huddled creature in oilskins, silent and motionless in the stern, with closed eyes and wet, dark hair matted upon his forehead. Then a sailor, dropping lightly into the boat, shut off my view for a little. There was a whir of flung line; an exchange of quick-spoken, and to me unintelligible, words between the sailor in the dory and a sailor standing beside me on the yacht's deck; and then, the line was taut and straining, and the dory, which had sheered off astern, was being brought up slowly alongside.

Now, I realized for the first time that our engines had stopped and that, save for the roll, we were almost stationary.

They were lifting the fisherman aboard when Cameron, at length aroused by the unusual, strolled forward and joined me.

"There's your bit of wreckage," I observed, smiling.

"Poor devil!" he exclaimed, sympathetically. "He seems more dead than alive.

"He's breathing, sir," announced Brandon, the first officer, "and not much more. We'll take him below, and see what can be done for him, sir."

He appeared to be about forty years of age, a somewhat shrunken, weather-beaten creature, with face deeply lined and half hidden behind possibly a week's growth of dark beard. It is not easy to read a man with his eyes closed, but I was far from prepossessed by what of this fellow's features was on view. Ordinarily I should have given him scant heed, but today was no ordinary day, and my suspicions were superactive. Even the most trivial occurrences took on significance. And this was not a trivial occurrence. Certainly it was not usual. Fishermen blown to sea in storms and overcome by exposure, hunger and thirst were common enough, perhaps, but within the past week there had been no storm; the weather had been as mild as that of June, with an August day or two thrown in. How was it possible, then, for this bit of flotsam to have come where it was and in the condition it was?

To Cameron I gave no hint of my reasoning, but to Captain MacLeod I put the question without hesitation.

"It does seem a bit odd, Mr. Clyde," he returned, judicially, "but you see his mast and sail had gone by the board and his oars, too. It looks to me, sir, as if he'd been run down, maybe, and nigh swamped. Of course we can't tell till he gets his senses and lets us know."

Though this put the matter in a new light, it did not by any means relieve my anxiety; and I asked MacLeod to have a sharp watch kept on the fellow, adding that I would come to him later for anything he might learn. I took care, too, to caution him to make no mention of the affair in the presence of Cameron.

It was not until after dinner that evening that I found opportunity again to question the captain. I came upon him in his stateroom, a comfortably commodious cabin, far forward on the upper deck. On his table was spread a chart, over which he was bending when I entered. A briarwood was gripped firmly between his teeth and the grateful odor of clean pipe smoke greeted me as I entered.

"He's come around, Mr. Clyde," he informed me, turning about in his swivel chair, "and I'm just trying to check up some of his statements by means of this chart here, and our weather record."

"And how do they check so far?" I asked, a little dubiously.

"Quite to a dot, sir," was his answer. "There's no breakdown anywhere, so far. According to his story, he sailed out of Gloucester harbor on Monday morning. His name's Peter Johnson, and he lives in East Gloucester. He says the wind was strong from the westward, and he made the banks all right without mishap. But about noon, the wind died, and a thick fog came in from the northeast, chill and sopping, sir. He kept moving about, and finally in the thick of it lost his bearings. It had clouded over and after a little it began to rain. He made a try for Gloucester harbor, but must have sailed southeast instead of northwest. Then the night came down, and the fog was like a dozen blankets, he says. His food was gone and most of his water, but he said he'd seen worse than that many a time, and just prayed for the fog to lift and give him a sight of the stars. And the next thing that happened was what I suspected, sir. He heard a steamer's whistle. He had his sheet out and was running before the wind, and that steamer coming upon him out of the fog, caught his boom, ripped out his mast and nearly capsized his dory. When she righted, the steamer's lights were fading into the fog again, his boat was half full of water and his oars were washed away. Well, sir, to make a long story short, he must have caught a current that carried him well out beyond Cape Cod, and then slewed him around the southermost end of Nantucket island. I questioned him about lights and fog signals, and making due allowance for his condition, his yarn works out pretty straight. He'd been drifting about for three days when we picked him up and was half dead of thirst and hunger. But he's come around better than might be expected, and—"

And then I interrupted him.

"Three days without water?" I questioned.

"And without food. Yes, sir."

"When did he tell you this story?"

"About six o'clock, sir."

"Could a starving man recover that quickly?"

"He might, sir," MacLeod answered, "The average healthy man can go ten days without food or drink."

"What have you done with him?"

"He's in the seaman's quarters, forward, sir."

"See that he's kept there, Mr. MacLeod," I told him. "I'd feel better if you put a watch on him tonight. Tomorrow we'll run in to Gloucester and look up his people and friends."

"Very good, sir."

"Thank you."

I thought of having a look at Peter Johnson, myself, for I was somewhat curious to study that face again when it was sentient, and had eyes open, but on second thought I decided to wait until morning. It seemed silly to suspect this seemingly honest but unfortunate fisherman.

We had not been speeding so well during the afternoon; there was some trouble reported from the engine room, and it was a question whether we had made over fifteen knots an hour since two o'clock. I know that at ten o'clock that night, when the moon went down, we were somewhere east of Nantucket, and directly in the path of the transatlantic liners.

The night was balmy as a night in springtime, and Cameron and I in light overcoats sat on the after-deck, watching the moon slide slowly below the dark horizon line. Our chairs were close together, facing the lee rail; his the farther astern. We talked of many things, I remember. He was always interested in my work, and especially in my ambitions to make The Week a power for national good; and, I remember that we discussed several projects I then had in mind for bringing about reform in high places. But the subject which then interested me most, and regarding which I still experienced a vague, unreasoning uneasiness, he had avoided throughout the day and evening, with what seemed to me studied intent.

The sudden cessation of hostilities on the part of those whom he had been given every reason to look upon as his implacable enemies, was certainly strange enough to have invited endless debate; and I marveled that, after having accepted my falsehood as truth, he had not chosen to go over with me the whole marvelously perplexing business.

His mind, I knew, was relieved by what I had made him believe, or he would not now be the man he was; but despite that, it appeared to me, it would be most natural for him, on this day of all days—the twenty-first of the month—to question, at least, my previously emphatically stated conclusions.

There had been a moment of silence between us, and these reflections were dominant with me, as six bells, ringing out musically, announced that midnight was but an hour distant. At that instant, while in time to the bell's strokes, there echoed in my brain the words: "Know then, that before the morning of the eighth day hence—" Cameron, lowering his cigar, turned to me with:

"Clyde, I wonder if you have forgotten what day this is!"

I don't know why, coming at just that particular juncture, the question should be more upsetting than if it had come at some other time of day, but I know it seemed so to me.

For a little space my tongue refused its office. There was a lump in my throat which demanded to be swallowed, and I made a pretence of coughing to hide my plight. At length I answered, a bit lamely:

"No, I haven't forgotten. It's Wednesday, the twenty-first of October."

He returned his cigar to his lips and smoked in silence for a full minute. Then, he said, quietly:

"It's seven days since that empty envelope came."

"Yes," I returned.

There was another slight pause and he went on:

"I have been thinking that possibly you were wrong about the significance of that empty envelope. Possibly those enigmatical persons intended that absence of a definite threat to imply the inconceivably terrible."

Now that he had started to talk about it, I wished that he had continued his silence. I could not understand how I had convinced him before, knowing all the while that I was without truth to support me. Certainly, now, pervaded as I was with that grim disquietude, it would be even more difficult to carry conviction with my words.

"Whatever they intended," I ventured, yielding a fraction of a point, "it seems to me that they'll have some difficulty in carrying it out. There are no portraits here to mutilate and no mirrors to smash. For the previous performances there must be some more or less simple explanation. Neither you nor I believe in the supernatural; therefore the things that happened at Cragholt were brought about by natural means, seemingly inexplicable as they were. Now no natural means can be brought to bear to perform any such legerdemain on this yacht. You know that. There's not a man here, except that poor old fisherman, that we don't know all and everything about. So, I say, no matter what they planned; this time they are outwitted." And even as I said it, I saw clearly before my vision these words: "Say not Heaven is high above! Heaven ascends and descends about our deeds, daily inspecting us wheresoever we are."

"Then you agree with me? You think something may have been planned?"

"I wouldn't pretend to interpret their symbolism," I answered evasively. "The empty envelope impressed me as synonymous with saying, 'Nothing more at present!' Even now I think that if they had meant to continue they would have said so. I'm almost sure they would."

I was quite sure, of course, but I dared not say so.

Cameron smoked on quietly for a while in a ruminative mood. Eventually he threw the end of his cigar over the rail, and leaned forward.

"I don't know," he said perplexedly, "I don't know."

This I hoped was to be the end of the matter, for tonight at least; but presently he began to talk of those first two letters, to conjecture, to wonder, to dissect phrases, to dig out subtleties of meaning from euphemistic expressions. And then I knew that he had every word memorized, just as I had.

Seven bells had struck and we were still talking. But now and then there were pauses in our converse—intervals of silence of varying length—during which I sat with my gaze stretching out over the black waters and my hearing strained for any unusual sound. More than once during the evening I thought I had detected far off the pounding note of a motor boat's exhaust, but had put the notion aside as too improbable for entertainment. Now, faintly, I seemed to hear it again; not so distant, but muffled.

I got up and stood close to the rail, and listened with ear bent. Then I determined to go to my cabin for a night glass which I had included among my traps. But at that moment the sound, which I had made sure of, ceased, and I stood a second or two longer, expecting it to resume.

Altogether it was not over a minute or two that I stood there. It seemed much less than that. Then I turned with a question for Cameron. I wondered whether he had heard the sound too.

"I say, Cam—" I began, and stopped, startled, with his name half uttered.

His chair was empty. He was not on deck. I ran to the saloon. He was not there. I flung open the door of his stateroom. He was not there, either. I had the yacht searched for him. He was not on the yacht.

CHAPTER IX.

A Craft Without Lights.

Composure is second nature with me. I claim no credit for it; it is a matter of temperament rather than cultivation. But now my temperament was all awry, and my composure fled me. I was excited. More than that, I was frantic, distracted, rattled. I wanted to do a dozen things at once; to get answers to a score of questions in a single moment. And the consequence may be imagined. For five—ten minutes, nothing was done whatever. Then the search-light was got into play, sweeping the waters on all sides, far and near; but with paltry result. Five or six miles astern we made out a power boat, similar to that which I had seen through the glass earlier in the day. To the eastward a steamer with two funnels was just coming into range. The white sails of a coasting schooner showed to westward. Trailing in our wake was our squalid salvage, the dory of the fisherman.

MacLeod, trained to coolness, retained his wits. Systematically he set to work. Likely and unlikely places aboard the yacht were looked into. Before I knew what he was about, we were going back over the way we had come with the search-light swinging in a circle and a half-dozen sharp-eyed seamen scanning every square foot of rolling wave.

"I can't understand it," I kept repeating aloud, with senseless iteration. "I can't understand it."

I was standing alone, well forward, leaning over the rail. Presently MacLeod laid a hand on my shoulder.

"We can't do anything more than we are doing, Mr. Clyde," he said in his matter-of-fact way. "For my part, I can't understand it, either; but since Mr. Cameron's not aboard, there's only one conclusion, and that is that he's overboard. And since there was no one interested in throwing him there, then it seems very clear that he must have jumped."

"Jumped!" I cried, in irritation. "My God, man! Don't I tell you that I was not three feet away from him, and only for a minute or two? How could he have jumped without my hearing him? How could he even have got out of his chair, without my hearing him?"

The captain shrugged his shoulders.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Danger in Crabs.

Crabs, no matter how fresh they be, make some fellows sick nearly every time they eat them. Still they take a chance on it every once in so often just the same. Crabs must be very fine eating and have a lovely taste as they are being munched and put into the paunches of the crab-eaters. Crabs will eat a dead horse, or rats, pigs, cats or dogs decaying in the ocean. Perhaps if the crabs were penned up and fed on the choicest of foods for some days, so as to get a few of the dirty germs out of them, as well as rid them of the filth they eat, then in a somewhat cleaner condition they might not, after being eaten, turn the insides wrong side out and inside outward—both ways at the same time. Some foolish fellows feel highly insulted when told that they take a chance every time they eat crabs. Eat 'em and don't kick at the doctor bill.—Exchange.

Value of Swimming Lessons.

Florence Shellard, a Windsor schoolgirl, recently demonstrated the value of swimming being included in the school curriculum, when in a most plucky manner she rescued another little girl, aged five years, from drowning in the Thames. Without waiting to call for help, Miss Shellard jumped into the river and went to the rescue of her companion, who had already gone down twice before she reached her.—London Telegraph.

International Sunday School Lesson

By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

LESSON FOR JANUARY 26.

CAIN AND ABEL.

LESSON TEXT—Genesis 4:1-15.
GOLDEN TEXT—"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." I John 3:15.

In due process of time and in obedience to God's command (Gen. 1:28), Eve bore Adam two sons, each a very different type of manhood. Mothers ought to ponder upon the words of Eve, "I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah." Parents should realize that it is God who sends them their children, e. g., by his help, and it is to him they must give account for their nurture and upbringing. Upon reaching manhood one, Abel, became a shepherd, and the other, Cain, became a farmer. The difference in their characters, not their occupations, is illustrated by the sacrifices they brought to offer unto God.

Although it is not recorded, it is highly probable that God had commanded that there should be an offering of blood. Sin had entered the world and we are told in Hebrews 9:22 and 10:19, 30, that only by the shedding of blood is there any remission of sin. The blood atonement may be repugnant to some superficial thinkers, but it is not in the sight of God. It is God's way. It can be traced in the early traditions of nearly every religion.

Cain's Offering.

The fundamental fault was really in Cain and not in his offering. Had Cain's heart been right he would have made a proper sacrifice that would have been acceptable in God's sight, I. John 3: 12. We are told that Abel's offering was of faith, Heb. 11:4, and hence it was a more excellent sacrifice than that of Cain, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." The firstling of the flock, the lamb, was a type of that true sacrifice offered before the foundations of the world, John 1:29. There is another fundamental difference between these two offerings. Cain's offering represented the labor of his own hands and was much more pleasing to the eyes than that of Abel.

God's disrespect for Cain's offering was due to sin, vv. 6. "Sin croucheth at the door." Here sin is pictured as a wild beast lying at the door and ready to spring upon him who first gives entrance. God dealt in mercy with Cain, even though he did not accept of his offering, but Cain did not conquer the sin crouching at his door and therefore the terrible denouement.

From the marginal reading (R. V.) of verse eight and also from the Septuagint we gather that Cain inveigled Abel into the country, having deliberately planned to wreak his vengeance upon him, it being impossible to do so in the place where the sacrifice had been offered. Cain's anger, not only against God, but against his brother whom God had accepted, is evidenced today by the way the world hates those whom God accepts, John 15:19. Cain slew Abel because his own works had been evil and those of his brother righteous.

The Old, Old Question.

God gave Cain an opportunity to confess his sin (v. 9). See I. John 11:9. As passion subsided Cain "saw," and "heard," even though he lied while trying to escape a just punishment. God's startling question has been ringing down through these ages, "Where is thy brother?" Brothers are being wronged, oppressed, cheated, and defrauded. Brothers are being lost for whom Christ died. Industrial oppression, "man's inhumanity to man," and the "blood of righteous Abel," shall be, is being, and has been required of the nation, the age yea the individual. Cain saw his lie was detected and so tried to excuse himself. Millions have repeated his weak excuse, "Am I my brother's keeper?" And God has thundered back the reply, "Yes." We are debtors to all.

The penitence of Cain was not over his guilt, but rather over the degree of his punishment, vv. 13, 14. Murder always demands vengeance. Note however, the marginal reading, "mine iniquity is greater than can be forgiven." Thank God we have a mediator of a better covenant, Heb. 12:24. Cain made a mistake in assuming that God could be localized in one place and that he who must become a wanderer in the land, "the first colonist," would of necessity be separated from God's protecting care. There was the added fear of himself being slain; "how doth conscience make cowards of us all."

We therefore see in this lession, I., The Sons, vv. 1, 2; II., The Sacrifice, vv. 3, 7; III., the Slain Brother, vv. 8-10; IV., The Sentence, vv. 11-15.

For the younger pupils emphasize jealousy and its developments. The fact that we are keepers of our brothers as we deal with the sins of the day. The missionary appeal can well be emphasized in connection with this lesson. The development of habits from the seed thought comes logically in this connection. But be sure to emphasize the mercy of God and salvation through the Blood of the Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ.

LET GOOD CHANCE GO BY

Bluffers Had Perfect Right to Be Mad, Considering the Extremely Unfortunate Circumstances.

Bluffers bounced into the club, jammed his hat down on a table with a fierce, resounding bang, and flung himself into an easy chair.

"What's wrong today, Bluffers? You look bad."

"I'll never forgive myself. I kicked a man out of my house last night!"

"Humph! I've kicked out many a one. Young fellow, I suppose?"

"No; past middle age."

"Well, these old codgers have no business to be coming round courting young girls. I would have kicked him out myself."

"Yes, but I have found out since that this man wasn't courting my daughter. He was after my mother-in-law."

WHAT WORRIED HER.

"I asked your father and he said you were old enough to know your own mind."

"He didn't tell you how old I was, did he?"

Slow Chap.

"Yes," laughed the girl with the pink parasol, "he is the slowest young man I ever saw."

"In what way, dear?" asked his chum.

"Why, he asked for a kiss and I told him I wore one of those knotted veils that took so long to loosen."

"And what did he do?"

"Why, the goose took time to untie the knot."—Mack's Monthly.

Taste.

"Which has the best taste, you or your wife?"

"I am sure my wife has."

"That is very generous of you."

"I could not well deny it, in view of the person each of us married."

Lives of great men may remind us that it is sometimes better to remain obscure.

You can jolly the average man by referring to him as a prominent citizen.